

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
COUNCIL POLICY

CURRENT

SUBJECT: SUSTAINABLE BUILDING PRACTICES (“GREEN BUILDING”) FOR
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUILDING PROJECTS
POLICY NO.: 900-14
EFFECTIVE DATE: June 19, 2001

BACKGROUND:

Buildings consume approximately 36% to 40% of total energy produced in this country. As energy reliability and costs continue to challenge California, the City of San Diego is committed to reducing the energy and environmental impacts of building design, construction and maintenance both within the public and private sectors.

The City Council previously adopted two policies that address sustainable building practices, otherwise known as “Green Building” practices. City Policy 900-14 “Green Building Policy” was adopted in 1997, and City Policy 900-16 “Community Energy Partnership” was adopted in 2000. The purpose of this revision is to combine and update Policies 900-14 and 900-16 to provide a more comprehensive and coherent framework for City building projects as well as residential and commercial development within the City of San Diego.

The concept of Sustainable Building “Green Building” practices is designing, constructing and operating buildings that give a high level of environmental, economic and engineering performance. They are designed to consider occupant health, energy and transportation efficiency, resource and material conservation (air, water, land, fuel), as well as reuse and recycling during building construction, operation and demolition. The Environmental Services Department administrative headquarters is the City’s first example of a “Green Building”, and consumes 50% less energy than the 1998 edition of California’s Title 24.

As a participant in the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Cities for Climate Protection Program, the City of San Diego is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by reducing electricity use.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to assert the City’s commitment to green building practices, and provide leadership and guidance in promoting, facilitating, and instituting such practices in the community.

POLICY:

The following principles will guide construction and renovation activities of both City facilities and private residential and commercial buildings:

1. The natural environment and built habitat are interdependent; ways have to be found for both to coexist in harmony.
2. High environmental quality, outdoors and indoors, is essential for the City's long-term health and welfare.
3. Innovative methods and up-to-date technologies should be used in the design, construction, and renovation of buildings within the City of San Diego in order to bring our consumption of energy and natural resources in line with the goals of sustainability.

In order to achieve the necessary improvements in our natural and built environment, City building projects will be planned and executed using the following guidelines. The City will encourage participation and innovation by the private sector through a voluntary program that encourages energy-efficient standards in the residential and commercial building industries.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY:

1. The goal is to meet the most current criteria set forth in nationally recognized programs, e.g. US EPA "Energy Star for Buildings" and US DOE "Sustainable Buildings Program".
2. Buildings will be designed to take the maximum advantage of passive and natural sources of heat, cooling, ventilation and light.
3. Mechanical and electrical systems will be designed and constructed to achieve the maximum energy efficiency achievable with current technology. Computer programs such as DOE-2, Energy Pro, MICROPAS, EQuest, Power DOE, and HAP 3.22 will be used where feasible to analyze the effects of various design options and select the set of options producing the most efficient integrated design. Energy efficiency measures will be selected to achieve energy consumption at 25% below California's current Title 24 standards, to the extent such measures are economically justified.
4. Creative design and innovative energy sources and uses will be encouraged to reduce the consumption of energy from non-renewable sources. A deliberate effort will be made to convert to renewable energy sources to the extent that such options are feasible.

5. All new or significantly remodeled City facilities shall be designed and constructed to achieve energy consumption levels at least 25% below the then current Title 24 standards. An average payback period of five years will be used as a guide for the aggregate of all energy efficiency measures included in a project. In order to maximize energy efficiency measures within these guidelines, projects shall combine energy efficiency measures requiring longer payback periods with measures requiring shorter payback periods to determine the overall project period.

HEALTH AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION:

1. Projects will be designed to avoid inflicting permanent adverse impact on the natural state of the air, land and water, by using resources and methods that minimize pollution and waste, and do not cause permanent damage to the earth, including erosion.
2. Projects will include innovative strategies and technologies such as porous paving to conserve water, reduce effluent and run-off, thus recharging the water table.
3. When feasible, native plants will be used in landscaping to reduce pesticide, fertilizer, and water usage.
4. Buildings will be constructed and operated using materials, methods, mechanical and electrical systems that ensure a healthful indoor air quality, while avoiding contamination by carcinogens, volatile organic compounds, fungi, molds, bacteria, and other known toxins.
5. Projects will be planned to minimize waste through the use of a variety of strategies such as: a) reuse of materials or the highest practical recycled content; b) raw materials derived from sustainable or renewable sources; c) materials and products ensuring long life/durability and recyclability; d) materials requiring the minimum of energy and rare resources to produce and use; and e) materials requiring the least amount of energy to transport to the job site.

OUTREACH / EDUCATION:

1. An education and outreach effort will be implemented to make the community aware of the benefits of “Green Building” practices.
2. The City will sponsor a recognition program for innovative Green Building projects implemented in the public as well as private sector in an effort to encourage and recognize out standing environmental protection and energy conservation projects.

PRIVATE-SECTOR/INCENTIVES:

1. It shall be the policy of the City Council to expedite the ministerial plan check for projects which meets the criteria of the Community Energy Partnership Program. The criteria may include, but is not limited to:

Compliance with EPA “Energy Star for Buildings” Program
Residential buildings must exceed Title 24 by 30%
Commercial buildings must exceed Title 24 by 15%

2. It shall be the policy of the City Council to investigate further incentives to encourage energy efficiency in City operations, and in the private sector.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The City will seek cooperation with other governmental agencies, public interest organizations, and the private sector to promote, facilitate, and implement Green Building and energy efficiency in the community.

LEGISLATION:

The City will support State and Federal legislation that promotes or allows sustainable development, conservation of natural resources, and energy efficiency technology.

REFERENCES:

Related existing Council Policies:
400-11, Water Conservation Techniques
400-12, Water Reclamation/Reuse
900-02, Energy Conservation and Management
900-06, Solid Waste Recycling

HISTORY:

Adopted by Resolution R-289457 11/18/1997
Amended by Resolution R-295074 06/19/2001